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TO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

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INFO AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 277002

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CG, BE, PFOR

SUBJECT: BELGIAN-ZAIRIAN NEGOTIATIONS

REF: KINSHASA 10488

1. SUMMARY. GOB FONMIN DESK OFFICER FOR ZAIRE REPORTS GOB INTENDS MAINTAIN CURRENT LEVEL OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO ZAIRE BUT HOPES TO REDUCE PRESENT DISPERSION OF ITS EFFORT AND TO SHIFT RESOURCES FROM GENERAL EDUCATION TO OTHER AREAS, PARTICULARLY AGRICULTURE. HE INDICATES GOB PURSUING COMPENSATION NEGOTIATIONS FOR DOMESTIC POLITICAL REASONS BUT EXPECTS NO MORE THAN PAPER RESULTS. HE STATES THERE IS NO PRESENT INTENTION TO CONDITION FUTURE AID UPON SATISFACTORY SETTLEMENT OF COMPENSATION ISSUE. END SUMMARY.

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2. DURING CALL BY AF/C COUNTRY OFFICER STRAND DECEMBER 16,

BELGIAN FONMIN ZAIRE DESK OFFICER JAENEN SAID PRINCIPAL ISSUES FOR NEGOTIATION WITH ZAIRE ARE, AS REPORTED REFTEL, BELGIAN AID PROGRAM AND COMPENSATION FOR ZAIRIANIZED BELGIAN PROPERTIES. JAENEN DECLINED TO SPECULATE ON RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO ISSUES AND WOULD ONLY SAY THAT PRESENT GOB HAS NO PRESENT INTENTION OF TYING FUTURE AID TO SATISFACTORY SETTLEMENT OF COMPENSATION CLAIMS. HE REITERATED NOW FAMILIAR GOB LINE THAT MINISTERIAL TALKS MUST BE PRECEDED BY CAREFUL PREPARATION AT "TECHNICAL" LEVEL.

2. BELGIAN AID.

A. JAENEN, WHO HAD COME DIRECTLY FROM AID STRATEGY SESSION WITH AMB. KERREMANS, SAID GOZ MUST DEFINE ITS NEEDS, GOB ITS CAPABILITIES. HE SAID GOB INTENDED TO MAINTAIN PRESENT LEVEL OF AID PROGRAM, WHICH CONSISTS ENTIRELY OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (1700 - 1800 PERSONS, OF WHOM ABOUT 1000 TEACHERS AND 80 MILITARY) AND IS RUNNING ABOUT BF 2.7 BILLION A YEAR. IT WOULD LIKE, HOWEVER, TO SHIFT EMPHASIS AWAY FROM GENERAL EDUCATION, WHERE ZAIRIANS ARE CAPABLE OF REPLACING BELGIAN TEACHERS, TO OTHER AREAS, PARTICULARLY AGRICULTURE. NO INTENTION REDUCE HIGHER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS, WHICH GOB CONSIDERS STILL USEFUL. AS IT MOVES OUT OF GENERAL EDUCATION, WHERE ITS PERSONNEL ARE WIDELY SCATTERED, OFTEN IN GROUPS OF TWO OR THREE, GOB WOULD LIKE ALSO TO CONCENTRATE TA IN SMALLER NUMBER OF PROJECTS AND GEOGRAPHIC LOCATIONS, ON BELIEF SUCH CONCENTRATION WOULD ENHANCE EFFECTIVENESS OF AID (COMMENT: AND REDUCE SECURITY THREAT IN TIMES OF POLITICAL STRESS).

B. STRAND EXPLAINED US ALSO LOOKING TO SHIFT AID FOCUS INCREASINGLY TOWARD AGRICULTURE, IN RESPONSE TO BOTH CONGRESSIONAL MANDATE AND ZAIRE'S DEVELOPMENT NEEDS. HE SUGGESTED POSSIBLE COMPLEMENTARITY OF RESPECTIVE U.S. AND BELGIAN INPUTS (I.E., FINANCING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE) IN AGRICULTURE FIELD AND ASKED JAENEN WHETHER HE AWARE OF ANY CONSULTATION ON THIS BETWEEN AMERICAN AND BELGIAN AID PEOPLE IN KINSHASA. JAENEN SAID HE WAS NOT BUT THOUGHT IT WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA.

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C. JAENEN SAID GOB GIVES NO "FINANCIAL" AID TO ZAIRE AND HAS NO PLANS TO DO SO. HE SAID BANANA PORT STUDY (IN COOPERATION WITH FRENCH) AND EAST-WEST HIGHWAY STUDY ARE PART OF TA PROGRAM AND THAT GOB HAS NO PRESENT PLANS TO OFFER FINANCING FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THESE PROJECTS. HE COULD NOT SAY WHETHER SUCH FINANCING MIGHT BE OFFERED AS QUID PRO QUO FOR COMPENSATION.

4. COMPENSATION.

A. JAENEN SAID FIRST STEP WOULD BE TO GET FROM GOZ A FULL INVENTORY OF ZAIRIANIZED PROPERTIES. HE SAID GOB HAD SET UP OFFICE TO RECEIVE CLAIMS (WITHOUT MAKING ANY COMMITMENT TO ESPOUSE THEM) FOLLOWING MOBUTU'S NOVEMBER 30 SPEECH, BUT THAT TO DATE ONLY ABOUT 400 CLAIMS HAD BEEN SUBMITTED; ANOTHER 100 OR SO HAD BEEN SUBMITTED TO THE EMBASSY IN KINSHASA. MOST BELGIANS AFFECTED BY ZAIRIANIZATION HAD CHOSEN TO REMAIN IN ZAIRE, EITHER IN SOME WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH NEW OWNERS OR IN SOME OTHER

CAPACITY ALTOGETHER. MOST APPARENTLY OPERATING ON ASSUMPTION THEY STAND BEST CHANCE OF SALVAGING SOMETHING IF THEY STAY ON THE SCENE. INSTEAD OF THE THOUSANDS OF HEADS OF FAMILY GOB HAD EXPECTED TO RETURN ("WE HAD THOUGHT WE WOULD HAVE TO CHARTER PLANES FOR THEM"), ONLY HUNDREDS HAD COME. JAENEN SAID GOB HAD NOT ESTIMATED TOTAL VALUE OF BELGIAN PROPERTIES ZAIRIANIZED WITHOUT PAYMENT OR OTHER SATISFACTORY ARRANGEMENT BETWEEN THE OLD AND NEW OWNERS. HOWEVER PRIVATE REPRESENTATIONAL ORGANIZATION CEDIOM (CENTRE D'ETUDES ET DE DOCUMENTATION DES INVESTISSEMENTS OUTRE-MER), TO WHICH MANY MORE DESPOILED BELGIANS HAVE TURNED THAN TO GOB, HAS COME UP WITH A GLOBAL FIGURE OF BF 12 BILLION (ABOUT 333 MILLION DOLLARS) FOR CASES ABOUT WHICH IT HAS INFORMATION. (JAENEN ASKED THAT THIS ESTIMATE BE TREATED AS CONFIDENTIAL).

C. ASKED WHETHER HE THOUGHT ANY SUBSTANTIAL COMPENSATION WOULD EVER BE PAID BY GOZ AND/OR ZAIRIAN BENEFICIARIES OF ZAIRIANIZATION, JAENEN SAID NO: "THEY WILL SIGN AN CONFIDENTIAL

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AGREEMENT BUT THE MONEY WILL NEVER BE PAID." GOB COULD NOT BE SURE OF THIS, HOWEVER; AND, EVEN IF IT WERE SURE, DOMESTIC POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS REQUIRED THAT GOVERNMENT MAKE AN EFFORT. IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO TELL PARLIAMENT THAT GOVERNMENT REGARDED SITUATION AS HOPELESS AND THEREFORE NOT WORTH PURSUING. IN SUM, GOB FELT IT IMPORTANT TO EMBARK ON COMPENSATION NEGOTIATIONS EVEN IF IT HAD NO EXPECTATION THAT THEY WOULD YIELD SUBSTANTIAL RESULT. SHIFTING GROUND SOMEWHAT, PERHAPS TO BLUR WHAT HE FELT HAD BEEN OVERLY FRANK ADMISSION, JAENEN CONCLUDED THAT GREAT "IMAGINATION" WOULD BE REQUIRED TO FIND WAYS IN WHICH BELGIANS COULD BE MEANINGFULLY COMPENSATED. HAD HE ANY IDEAS? NO.

5. COMMENT: WE ARE IN NO POSITION TO ASSESS THE EXTENT TO

WHICH JAENEN'S COMMENTS REFLECT GOB THINKING. IF, HOWEVER, THE GOB IS INDEED PURSUING NEGOTIATIONS IN GOOD PART FOR SHOW, THE PROSPECTS FOR CONTINUED IMPROVEMENT OF ZAIRIAN-BELGIAN RELATIONS WOULD SEEM FAR BETTER THAN IF GOB WERE DETERMINED TO GET ACTUAL PAYMENT OF SUBSTANTIAL COMPENSATION. AT THE SAME TIME, WE WONDER WHETHER, DESPITE JAENEN'S DISCLAIMER, THE GOB WILL NOT AT SOME POINT USE THE CARROT OF AID TO WIN AT LEAST COSMETIC CONCESSIONS WITH WHICH IT CAN LIVE POLITICALLY AT HOME. KISSINGER

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